

REMARKSStatus of the Application

Claims 3, 5-8, 11-12 and 14-16 are pending. Of the pending claims, claim 3 has been withdrawn from consideration. With this amendment applicants have cancelled claims 5-8 and 11-12 and added new claims 17-23.

Tanaka Patent Document JP7276543

Applicants' October 6, 2004 Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement, submitted after the Final Office Action, disclosed Tanaka Patent Document JP7276543. In Figures 11 and 12, the Tanaka document discloses a hollow "molded paper pipe" 41 in which round paper tubes 45 are inserted in the longitudinal direction. Applicants wish to thank Examiner Johnson for providing a machine translation of Tanaka.

Claim 17 is New and Non-Obvious in View of Tanaka

New claim 17 requires that the reinforcing tubes be substantially the same length as the corner post, which Tanaka does not teach. The reason applicants' claim 17 is so limited is because applicants' objective is to reinforce the corner posts in the axial direction as well as the lateral direction (see paragraphs 0007 and 0013). Tanaka does not teach or suggest this limitation, which renders claim 17 novel in light of Tanaka.

Furthermore, one skilled in the packaging arts would not have been led or motivated by a reading of Tanaka to place reinforcing posts inside a corner post and make them the same

length as the corner post. This is because the Tanaka reference focuses on improving "shock absorbing" lateral support, and makes no mention of axial strength.

Tanaka describes four different types of reinforced protective paper tubes (Examples 2-5). The first three examples (Ex. 2-4) involve reinforcing the paper tube solely in the lateral direction. Example 5 (Figs. 9-14), arguably the closest example to applicants' claimed invention because it uses round reinforcing tubes disposed longitudinally within the hollow paper post (see Figs. 11-12), also reinforces the paper tube in the lateral direction. Since the text does not teach making the inner reinforcing tubes the same length as the hollow paper post and makes no mention of increasing axial strength, there is no evidence that one skilled in the art would have been led by Tanaka's Example 5 to make the inner reinforcing posts the same length as the corner post.

For these reasons, applicants assert that claim 17 is new and non-obvious and should be allowed.

The Other New Claims

Regarding new claim 19: Claim 19 requires joining the reinforcing tubes to the corner post with two sided tape, which Tanaka does not teach.

Regarding new claims 20 and 21: Claims 20 and 21 require affixing the reinforcing tubes to one another, which Tanaka does not teach.

Regarding new claim 22, it requires marking the reinforcing

tubes according to their physical characteristics, which Tanaka does not teach.

Regarding new claim 24 (an example of which is illustrated in Figures 2 and 6), claim 24 requires a corner post with a bead that helps hold the reinforcing post in place, which Tanaka does not teach.

Allowed Claims 14-16

Applicants note with appreciation Examiner Arnold's statement in the April 2, 2004 Final Office Action that claims 14-16 are allowed.

Summary

Applicants respectfully submit that claims 14- 24 are in condition for allowance. Applicants also request a statement that claim 3 would be allowable if rewritten so that it is dependent on claim 17, since claim 3 would then be a species of generic claim 17.

Respectfully submitted,



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